

U.S. and North Korean Statements on Ship Seizure

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WASHINGTON, Jan. 23—Following are the text of a statement issued by the Defense Department today and the transcript of a Pyongyang radio broadcast on the seizure of an American ship by North Korea:

Pentagon Statement

The U.S.S. Pueblo, a Navy intelligence collection auxiliary ship, was surrounded by North Korean patrol boats and boarded by an armed party in international waters in the Sea of Japan shortly after midnight E.S.T. last night.

The U.S. Government acted immediately to establish contact with North Korea through the Soviet Union. When the Pueblo was boarded, its reported position was approximately 25 miles from mainland of North Korea.

The ship reported the boarding took place at 127 degrees 54.3 minutes east longitude, 39 degrees 25 minutes north latitude. The time was 11:45 P.M. E.S.T.

The ship's complement consists of 83, including 6 officers and 75 enlisted men and 2 civilians.

At approximately 10 P.M. E.S.T., a North Korean patrol boat approached the Pueblo. Using international signals, it requested the Pueblo's nationality. The Pueblo identified itself as a U.S. ship. Continuing to use flag signals, the patrol boat said, "Heave to or I will open fire on you." The Pueblo replied, "I am in international waters."

The patrol boat circled the Pueblo. Approximately one hour later, three additional patrol craft appeared. One of them ordered: "Follow in my wake. I have a pilot aboard."

The four ships closed in on the Pueblo, taking different positions on her bow, beam and quarter. Two MIG aircraft were also sighted by the Pueblo circling off the starboard bow. The patrol craft began backing toward the bow of the Pueblo with fenders rigged. An armed boarding party was standing on the bow.

The Pueblo radioed at 11:45 P.M. that she was being boarded by North Koreans. At 12:20 A.M. E.S.T. today, the Pueblo reported that she had been requested to follow the North Korean ships into Wonsan and that she had not used any weapons.

The final message from the

Pueblo was sent at 12:32 A.M. It reported that it had come to "all stop" and that it was "going off the air."

The Pueblo is designated the AGER-2. It is a modified auxiliary light cargo ship (AKL). The Pueblo is 179 feet long and 33 feet wide with a displacement of 906 tons. It has a 10.2-foot draft. Its maximum speed is 12.2 knots.

Pyongyang Broadcast

Today naval vessels of our people's army captured an armed spy boat of the U. S. imperialist aggressor force that intruded way into the territorial waters of the republic and was carrying out hostile activities.

The U. S. imperialists and the Park Chung Hee puppet clique of traitors, extremely dismayed and upset by activities of armed guerillas, which have been rapidly stepped up recently, have proclaimed a so-called "emergency mobilization order" throughout South Korea and are tyrannically suppressing the people by mobilizing hundreds of thousands of puppet military and police troops, while frenziedly intensifying provocative machinations along the military demarcation line and the east and west coasts.

The U.S. imperialists' aggressor force—beginning to go wild at the moment the fierce surprise attack was launched at the heart of Seoul, which left the U.S. imperialists and the Park Chung Hee puppet clique of traitors rounds of small arms and artillery fire into our area last night, while on the sea they sent an armed spy vessel of the U.S. forces to intrude into the waters off Wonsan and perpetrate serious provocation.

What a brazen-faced, desperate deathbed kick this is! Our naval vessels engaged in patrol duty on the spot captured the armed vessel of the U.S. imperialist aggressor force and, the entire crew, resolutely defying the counterattack.

No matter how wild the U.S. imperialists and the Park Chung Hee puppet clique of traitors may get, they will be crushed in the face of the watertight defense by the heroic Korean People's Army. War clamoring and repressive machination they may resort to; they can never suppress the anti-U.S., anti-Government struggle of the patriotic South Korean people, which is forcefully spreading like a prairie fire.